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*THE STATE ART MUSEUM OF FLORIDA*

*A GUIDE TO THE  
ARCHIVES OF*  
THE JOHN AND MABLE  
RINGLING  
MUSEUM OF ART

*THE STATE ART MUSEUM OF FLORIDA*

Deborah W. Walk



The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art  
Sarasota, Florida

***This Guide was made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and through the generous support of the Museum's Foundation and docents, the Citizens Concerned for the Ringling Museums, Inc., and other donors.***

∞ *A Guide to the Archives of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art* is printed on alkaline, acid-free printing paper and meets the requirements of the American National Standards Institute--Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1992.

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5401 Bay Shore Road  
Sarasota, Florida 34243

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◆ ***Printed by The Printery, Sarasota, Florida***

Cover:  
Blueprint of the West Facade of Ca' d'Zan

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## FOREWORD

No institution should be without its recorded history, for knowledge of the past is one sure guide to the future. I am delighted, therefore, to introduce this first *Guide to the Archives of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art*. The *Guide* is the culmination of a multi-year project that began with a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to support the formation of an archives. Two people deserve special thanks: Lynell A. Morr, until 1993 Museum Librarian, who initiated the archives project and edited the *Guide*, and Deborah Walk, who compiled the *Guide* and whose responsibilities include the Archives in her position as Curator of the Circus Museum and Historical Resources. It is already hard to imagine the Ringling without the Archives. Increasing numbers of staff, volunteers, researchers, and the curious are coming to the Archives looking for information on the history of the Museum, the Ringlings, and the circus. I anticipate that this *Guide* will serve us all well as we seek to illuminate the past and open new possibilities for the future.

David Ebitz  
Director

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This *Guide to the Archives of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art* is the culmination of the work and support of many individuals who should be recognized for their assistance. In 1986, Laurence Ruggiero, Museum Director, first suggested that the Museum should organize an archives to preserve the history of the Museum. The Museum Archives Workshop offered by the Smithsonian Office of Museum Services assisted me in understanding the principles of archival theory and practice. With this knowledge, I was able to assist Museum Grants Writer, Susan Benedetti, in preparing a grant application to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission [NHPRC]. NHPRC funded the grant request in 1989. Without this financial assistance which permitted the Museum to hire a professional archivist, the Archives would probably still be an unattainable goal. Thanks go to Nancy Sahli and Laurie Baty of the NHPRC for their assistance and support throughout our grant project. Special appreciation must be expressed for the help and guidance provided by Patricia Moore, the Museum Grants Coordinator, during the final years of the project. She also helped the Archives to secure additional funding support from the Museum's Sedlmayr Fund for special projects dealing with the archival circus materials.

Special gratitude, of course, is reserved for the two archivists who worked so diligently on this grant. Waneta Sage-Gagné, the first archivist, undertook the formidable task of surveying all the Museum offices, locating the storage places for records throughout three major buildings and several smaller ones, and creating the original organization for these records in the Archives. The second archivist, Deborah Walk, refined and expanded the organization of the Museum records and manuscript collections, began the organization and finding aids for the wealth of circus materials in the collection, and undertook an ambitious oral history project for both Museum and circus history.

Thanks also go to Lucille Burke, part-time clerk for the Archives project during its second year, and to the many wonderful and invaluable volunteers who have helped in many diverse ways under the first archivist: Sigrid Merrington, Sharon Roth, Jan Silberstein, Gail Swanson, and Sylvia Waxman. The Archives also was fortunate to have the assistance of two graduate students from the School of Library and Information Science, University of South Florida: Brook Puckett and Gerianne Schaad.

Lastly, thanks must be expressed to the many individuals who contributed to the publication fund for the production of this *Guide*. Without their support, this research aid could not have been printed. Special thanks go to Edna Rosenbaum whose tireless efforts organized the fund-raising campaign and recruited donors, and to Joseph W. McKennon whose generous contribution helped us to reach our funding goal. The donors to the publication fund are: Citizens Concerned for the Ringling Museums, Inc., Pura Dawson, Kit Fernald, Eugene Gaddis, Arthur and Viola Goldberg, Bradley and Norma Kwenski, Myrtle Lane, John J. Lentz, Joseph W. McKennon, Members Council of The John and



Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Inc., Grace S. Millstone, Milton and Ellen Nantz, Sylvan and Edna Rosenbaum, Nan W. Russell, Paul and Merle Sauvé, Frederick and Muriel Shaffer, Elwood and Emily Talley. The following donors made contributions to the publication fund in memory of Irving G. Snyder, a former Museum docent: Barnet and Bertha Brandner, Lynette R. Cohen, Arthur and Viola Goldberg, Frances W. Hoefle, Myrtle Lane, E. F. and Harriett Petersen, Jr., Premier Club American International Dance Centre, Sylvan and Edna Rosenbaum, Paul and Merle Sauvé, and Nancy Morse Smith.

In conclusion, I would also like to express appreciation to the Museum staff whose cooperation was invaluable in creating the Archives and in resolving technical problems. Through the efforts of all these individuals, the history of this institution is now being preserved and a variety of challenging new projects and programs can now be undertaken.

Lynell A. Morr  
Archives Project Director & Editor

I would also like to add my thanks to all the staff and others who provided assistance and financial help that enabled this guide to be completed. The many talented volunteers who have worked with me are especially thanked for their dedication and hard work: Corrine Beggy, Max Butler, Marion Coker, Jim and Millicent Dunwoody, Jerry N. Hess, Alva Johnson, Myrtle Lane, Sigrid Merrington, Nan Russell, Merle Sauvé, Jan Silberstein, Bea Warfield, and Susan Weseley. The Archives also was fortunate to have the assistance of two students from Eckerd College: Angie Legakis and Heidi Anderson. Marion Coker, Sigrid Merrington, Myrtle Lane, Jan Silberstein and David Weeks are thanked for their proofreading and unceasing good humor in rereading the emerging *Guide*.

A deep sense of gratitude and thanks goes to Lynell A. Morr whose vision and determination made the archival program at the Ringling Museum a reality.

Deborah W. Walk  
Curator of the Circus Museum and Historical Resources



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to introduce researchers to the unique collections of the Archives at The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. The records are diverse; circus historians and fans, Florida historians, art historians, and also historians of museums will find the resources and information in the archival collections as varied and complex as the founders of the Museum themselves.

### History of the Museum

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art was founded by the Ringlings expressly for the people of Florida. Having amassed his fortune in real estate development, oil ventures, railroads, and his family's famous circus, Ringling worked with several art dealers to indulge his passion for collecting fine art. From 1924 to 1931, he bought hundreds of paintings, prints, drawings, sculpture, and decorative arts. The collection of Old Master paintings is a significant part of the Collection and includes paintings by Cortona, Luini, Strozzi, Guercino, Rosa, and Giordano. Five full-scale, oil-on-canvas cartoons by Peter Paul Rubens done for *The Triumph of the Eucharist* tapestry series are the centerpieces of the Flemish Baroque holdings. In 1927, John and Mable Ringling began construction on an art museum with the intent of bequeathing it, the art collection, the grounds, and Ca' d'Zan, their winter residence, to the people of Florida. Ringling astutely predicted the growth of the State and recognized the importance of art to the quality of life in Sarasota.

The Museum was first opened to the public for a day in 1930, less than a year after Mable Ringling's death. In December, 1936, John Ringling died. In 1946, the Museum complex was officially transferred to the State of Florida and was later designated the *State Art Museum of Florida* in 1980. A. Everett Austin was appointed the first director of the Museum by the Governor. Succeeding directors added to the original collection, established a modern art collection, instituted a conservation laboratory, and began a statewide art education and traveling exhibition program. In the early 1980's, the directors and staff began a decade-long restoration and reinstallation program of the Art Museum completed in 1991.

### History of the Archival Program

The proposal for a comprehensive history of the Ringlings and their influence on Sarasota was first considered by the Board of Trustees in 1950; however, the project was never begun. In the early 1980's, two volunteers, Jan Silberstein and Margie Smith, working under the guidance of Dr. William H. Wilson, Curator, began to collect materials for a proposed archives, but the attempt was short-lived due to Dr. Wilson's death. During the same period, David C. Weeks, historian and Museum docent, began to assemble information about the Ringlings and their impact on Sarasota for the Museum's Education Department. Dr. Weeks became convinced that an archives was needed to preserve not only the papers of the Ringlings, which were located in Ca' d'Zan, but also the historical records of the Museum, which were scattered throughout the complex.

In 1986, Laurence Ruggiero, Director of the Museum, asked Lynell Morr to submit a proposal and plan of work for the creation of a Museum Archives. Historical records and materials were needed for the galleries restoration project, but such research was difficult and, at times, nearly impossible to do because records were stored in various offices in three separate buildings spread out over the complex with no organizational control.

Lynell Morr attended a week-long workshop on Museum Archives at the Smithsonian Institution in the fall of 1986. In January 1987, Dr. Ruggiero presented a proposal to establish an Archives to the Board of Trustees. The motion passed

THAT the Director be directed to establish a Museum Archives to organize and preserve the records and other historical materials of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. [Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 12, 1987, p. 4]

In 1987, a grant application was submitted to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) for funding to establish a museum archives. The State Historical Records Advisory Board was most helpful and the Florida State Archives provided one of their archivists, Susan Potts, to perform a two-day survey of the Museum's records to support the grant request. Unfortunately, the grant application was not funded in 1987. For the next two years, research was done through the Librarian, using only the most important and most-used documents and photographs.

The NHPRC grant application was resubmitted for the 1989 funding year and the Museum was awarded a two-year grant to establish an Archives. The grant enabled the Museum to hire a professional archivist, Waneta Sage-Gagné, to establish procedures to transfer records to the Archives, survey the Museum's records, compile departmental histories for the finding aids, organize and arrange the collections, and help researchers in the use of archival records. After Ms. Sage-Gagné left the Museum in April 1991, Deborah Walk was hired in October on a part-time basis to complete the grant. Since then, with the assistance of a team of dedicated volunteers, the finding aids have been refined, vital records and microfilming programs have been started, an oral history program has begun to record the history of the Museum and the American circus, and major research projects have begun in preparation for the multi-year restoration of Ca' d'Zan and for the Fiftieth Anniversary of State-ownership of the Museum in 1996.

In the short period of the grant, the Archives established itself as an important and integral part of the Museum. Because of this, David Ebitz, Museum Director, made the Archivist a full-time, senior staff member in 1992.

Located in the Circus Museum, the archival collection includes: the records of the Museum; the personal papers of the Ringlings; circus materials; visual materials; and manuscript collections.

◆ Records of the Museum consist of the official public records that document the

history, organization, and programs of the Museum.

- ◆ The personal papers of the Ringlings include material that was found in the Art Museum and Ca' d'Zan and includes annotated auction catalogues, business records, and correspondence.
- ◆ The circus collection contains scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, circus programs, tickets, route books, and cards.
- ◆ The visual materials comprise over six thousand photographic images, as well as postcards, prints, posters, videos, and films that document the Museum, the Ringlings, or the history of the circus.
- ◆ The manuscript collections contain papers of individuals who have had a great impact on the Museum, records information about the Museum and its impact on Sarasota, the papers of individuals or families involved in the circus, and records documenting the history of winter quarters in Sarasota.

Although a component of the Art Library, a circus library containing over eight hundred volumes dealing with the American circus and its European roots is housed in the Archives for the convenience of researchers.

The Curator of the Circus Museum and Historic Resources is available on a limited basis to help with requests by telephone, letter, or in person. For extensive research, a visit to the Archives must be considered. Reproductions of items from the collections may be purchased. A fee schedule is available upon request and payment must be received in advance. Permission must be obtained from the Ringling Museum prior to the publication or use of any material and the material must be properly cited in any publication or exhibition. The Curator reserves the right to restrict the handling or copying of material of a fragile nature.

The Archives is open Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on all State holidays. Because of limited staff, appointments are required. Inquiries should be addressed to:

Archives

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art

5401 Bay Shore Road

Sarasota, Florida 34243

(813) 359-5744

FAX (813) 359-5731 or 5745



## HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

The *Guide to the Archival Collections of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art* is arranged in four major sections: the Ringling family papers, Museum records, Photographic collections, and Circus collections. These collections include: the papers of individuals and families; Museum records such as minutes, reports, educational programs, publications, and correspondence; architectural records; photographic collections and albums; scrapbooks; and business records.

The series entries contain the following elements:

- the creator; series or collection title
- inclusive dates of the records with semicolons denoting gaps in the date spans
- volume
- series or collection description
- restrictions when applicable
- reproduction note, if available in a form other than the original
- language note
- series, manuscript, or collection number.

Books, periodicals, vertical file material, and other non-Museum publications are excluded from this *Guide*, unless they form part of a collection. There are indexes and card catalogs in the Archives to access these materials.

All researchers should consult with the Archivist for information on additional resources. While this *Guide* does cover most of the holdings in the Archives, there remain materials yet to be described and new records are being regularly added to the archival collection.



## ◆ *Ringling Family Papers*

### **John Ringling Papers**

Papers, 1929-1935

37 boxes; 3 ledgers (18 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

John Ringling was born in MacGregor, Iowa, on May 31, 1866. His circus career began in 1884 when five Ringling brothers joined old-time circus man "Yankee" Robinson to organize their wagon show. Using the profits from the successful circus, Ringling began to invest in oil wells, ranches, real estate, railroads and his financial interests would span eight states and include over thirty-five corporations. In 1912, John and Mable Ringling purchased the Thompson property in Sarasota where they would later build Ca' d'Zan and the Art Museum. In Sarasota, he saw an opportunity to create a premier resort area and invested heavily in the community. From 1925 to 1930, John Ringling brought his collection to more than six hundred paintings to be housed in a public art museum that would be a memorial to him and his wife. The Museum was completed in 1929, the same year Mable died. From 1929 to his death in 1936, Ringling suffered many financial reversals. The most serious blow came in the summer of 1932 when he lost control of the circus. For more information about the Ringlings in Florida see *Ringling: The Florida Years, 1911 - 1936* by David C. Weeks [Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1993].

The Ringling Papers were located in Ca' d'Zan and are not complete. Ringling's business papers were seized and not returned by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for their two investigations into his affairs. After his death in 1936, the Ringling property and investments were managed by the North family and the attorneys for the State until 1946 when the property was transferred to the State. No attempt was made to maintain the papers. The bulk of the material spans the years between 1929-1935 and includes bills, receipts, auction catalogs, and correspondence that reflect his many interests in Sarasota and throughout the country. There are some records dealing with Ringling's oil, railroad, real estate, hotel, and ranch holdings, and also material on the Art Museum and circus. The circus business records are in no way complete. The Daily Financial Reports were wired to Ringling from various locations around America. Prospective employee correspondence indicates how little people knew of his severe financial situation. The files on the Crow Indians of Montana are worth noting. These records were generated in 1921 when Ringling was trying to renegotiate oil leases located on the Crow Reservation. Included in these files are Tribal Council Meeting Minutes from the five meetings that the lawyers for Ringling attended. Ringling's leases were rejected by the tribal elders in favor of more powerful oil interests. These records also reflect the attitudes of the times regarding the oil industry, the environment, and Native Americans. An inventory is available.

RF, series 01

**Mable Ringling Papers**

Papers, 1911 - 1928

2 folders

These few bills and pieces of correspondence of Mable Ringling (1875-1929) were found in Ca' d'Zan, the Ringling residence, after the property was transferred to the State. The bills (1925 - 1927) are mostly from hotels in France.

RF, series 02

**Emily Buck Ringling**

Papers, 1931 - 1934

2 folders

These bills and pieces of correspondence of Emily Ringling were found in Ca' d'Zan, the Ringling residence, after the property was transferred to the State.

RF, series 03

**J. E. Kirk Papers**

Papers, 1935 - 1938

2 boxes (1.75 linear ft.)

Chronological

These legal records document the divorce proceedings between John Ringling and his second wife, Emily Buck Ringling, and her suit against the Ringling estate.

Mss 88.01

**Estate Records of John Ringling**

Records, 1937 - 1946

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

These records were created during the period between John Ringling's death in 1936 and the final transfer of the estate to the State of Florida in 1946; they contain information about the property and Museum collections. These records are not complete; rather, they are records gathered and maintained by various staff over the years. There are copies of many briefs and other legal documents that outline the litigation between the Ringling Family and the State of Florida leading up to the transfer of the property in 1946. Of special interest is a copy of the McGurk Inventory of 1938, a court-ordered inventory of the entire estate. This inventory is still an important tool for information about the collection originally located in Ca' d'Zan.

ER, series 01

**North Family Papers**

Papers, 1936 - 1948

1 box (1 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

The North Family Papers collection contains the papers of John Ringling's sister, Ida Ringling North, and her sons, Henry and John North, located in Ca' d'Zan after the estate was transferred to the State. The Estate Litigation files in John Ringling North files are important for the history of the Museum. Also included are some scattered real estate records relating to various properties that North managed as the executor of the estate.

RF, series 03

## ◆ *Museum Records*

### ***Governing Boards, 1946 - 1989***

The State Board of Control was created in 1905 as the managing body over the State university system and was under the general supervision of the State Board of Education. When the Ringling estate was transferred to the State in 1946, it was under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Control. The Chair of the Board appointed the Director of the Museum. In 1959, the Board of Trustees of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art was created by the passage of chapter 59-60, *Laws of Florida*. The Board was empowered to appoint a director and to oversee the workings of the Museum.

#### **Board of Control**

Minutes, 1938 - 1965

4 reels of microfilm

Chronological order

This collection contains the records of the regular and special meetings of the Board of Control during the period that the Museum was under the Board. The official bound record is located in the Florida State Archives; the Board of Regents Library maintains the microfilm copy.

MF 01

#### **Board of Trustees of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art**

Official Minutes, 1959 - 1989

25 vols. ; 7 boxes (7 lin. ft.)

Chronological order

This collection contains the official record of the regular and special meetings of the Board of Trustees that document the activities of the Museum, information about acquisitions, loans, and finances. Used with the administrative records of the Directors, the Minutes give the most comprehensive view of the Museum and its workings. An index is available to the minutes.

GB, series 01

#### **Board of Trustees, Committee Minutes**

Minutes, 1975 - 1987

14 vols (2.5 linear ft.)

Arranged by committee, then chronologically

GB, series 02

#### **Board of Trustees of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art**

Administrative records, 1959 - 1980

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

GB, series 03

## ***Office of the Museum Director, 1946 - 1984***

As the chief executive officer for the Museum, the Director is now appointed by the Board of Trustees. Before the creation of the Board in 1959, the Director was appointed by the Florida State Board of Control. This record group contains the administrative correspondence and other records of the Museum's Directors, as well as papers documenting outside professional activities. Because there was no central repository for administrative files prior to 1990, the records of the early Directors are not comprehensive. The Exhibition Files of the Registrar's Office are an important resource in documenting the work of the Directors. Inventories are available in the Archives.

### **A[rthur] Everett Austin, Jr.**

Administrative records, 1946 - 1957

4 boxes (2 linear ft.)

Arranged in alphabetical order by subject

Austin was appointed as the first Director by J. Thomas Gurney, Chair of the Florida State Board of Control, following the transfer of the Museum to the State in 1946. Although from Hollywood, California, he had been previously the Director of the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford, Connecticut, for eighteen years. Austin remained the Museum Director until his death in 1957. The records in this series reflect Austin's tremendous impact on the Museum: began a conservation program, established a vigorous acquisition policy, renovated the art galleries, brought ground-breaking exhibitions, purchased and installed the Asolo Theater which hosted professional theatrical and operatic productions, conducted educational programs featuring internationally known scholars, established the first museum dedicated to the history of the circus, and opened Ca' d'Zan, the Ringling winter residence to visitors. Surviving records are few, but correspondence documents the wide range of Austin's interests.

DO, series 01

### **J[ohn] Kenneth Donahue**

Administrative records, 1957-1964

3 boxes (1.25 linear ft.)

Arranged in alphabetical order by subject

Kenneth Donahue became the Acting Director of the Museum following Austin's death in March 1957, and was officially named Director in May. Donahue came to the Museum as a Curatorial Librarian and later became Curator before being named as Director. Donahue inherited several ongoing projects from Austin and saw to their successful conclusion. The files on the reinstallation of the Asolo Theater in its new building and the establishment of Legislative Weekends in 1959 are interesting. Donahue's directorship marked the beginning of the Museum's acquisition of contemporary art. It was during Donahue's tenure that air conditioning was installed in the Art Museum. With the Wadsworth Athenaeum, the exhibition "A Director's Taste and Achievement," a tribute to Everett Austin, was opened in 1958.

DO, series 02



**Curtis G. Coley**

Administrative records, 1965-1972

4 boxes (1.75 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

Curtis Coley became the third Museum Director in 1965, following Donahue's resignation. Coley oversaw the addition of the Administrative Wing to the Museum. He instituted many new special events and activities at the Museum: The Committee to Rescue Italian Art; Fine Arts Institute (conducted with New College); the Governor's Conference on the Arts; and Members' Tours to Russia, Japan, and Greece. There is also correspondence dealing with the reorganization of the state government that transferred the Museum to the Florida Department of State and with the accreditation of the Museum by the American Association of Museums in 1972.

DO, series 03

**Richard S. Carroll**

Administrative records, 1973 - 1984

18 boxes (8.75 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

This series reflects Carroll's interest in Museum administration, programming, and outreach activities. The files on the Tampa Museum are significant as they reflect the special arrangements made by the Ringling Museum to provide administrative and operational support during the its first five years. There is also material on the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Museum celebrated in 1980 as well as records on the International Rubens Symposium held in 1982. The Asolo State Theater files contain information on performances and contractual agreements with the Asolo Company. Carroll maintained files on other Museum offices, for example, the Fiscal Office, the Information Office, the Education Office as well as others, and on administrative activities relating to the State. Of special interest is the 1983 report on the 1973 Long Range Plan.

DO, series 04

***Office of the Museum Curators, 1948 - 1992***

This record group contains the administrative records generated by various curators of the Museum. The history of the curatorial department started with the first Director, A. Everett Austin, who acted as Chief Curator; later, curators would be named for major collections within the Museum. Up until the 1970's, the majority of curatorial records are found in the Exhibition Files of the Registrar's Office. Since most of the exhibits mounted were administered by Curators, this collection is rich in evidence of the roles of the various Curators over the years, as well as drafts and catalogs that they wrote for the individual shows. Inventories are available in the Archives.

### **Art Seminars, Symposiums & Courses**

Administrative records, 1948 - 1969

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

These seminars were the first educational activities conducted at the Museum. Working with Florida State University, Austin started the seminars in 1948. Well-known, international art scholars came to Sarasota to lecture on various aspects of Art History. The curatorial staff of the Museum conducted the seminars annually for the next seventeen years. The lists of the various guest scholars are of great interest, as well as the correspondence and notes relating to each program or course.

CU, series 01

### **Curatorial Records of Kenneth J. Donahue, 1953 - 1956**

Curator

1 folder

CU, series 02

### **Curatorial Records of Creighton Gilbert, 1959 - 1961**

Assisted the Director in Curatorial & Educational activities

4 folders

CU, series 03

### **Curatorial Records of Robert O. Parks, 1961 - 1967**

Museum of Art Curator

1 folder

CU, series 04

### **Curatorial Records of Karl Nickel, 1967 - 1969**

Assistant Curator

1 folder

CU, series 05

### **Curatorial Records of Cynthia Duval, 1979 - 1986**

Curator of Decorative Arts; 1981, Curator of the Circus Museum; 1985 - 1986

Curator of Ca' d'Zan

2 boxes (1.5 linear ft.)

CU, series 06

### **Curatorial Records of Michael Auping, 1980 - 1984**

Curator of 20th Century Art

3 boxes (1 linear ft.)

CU, series 07

### **Curatorial Records of Anthony F. Janson, 1984 - 1989**

Curator of European Art Collection; Chief Curator

1 box (1 linear ft.)

CU, series 08

### **Curatorial Records of Mark Ormond, 1984 - 1988**

1984, Assistant Curator of 20th C. Collection; 1985, Acting Curator; 1987, Curator of Exhibits

2 boxes (2 linear ft.)

CU, series 09

**Curatorial Records of Joseph Jacobs, 1986 - 1989**

Curator of Modern Art  
CU, series 10

4 boxes (3.5 linear ft.)

**Curatorial Records of Michael McDonough, 1987 - 1991**

Curator of Ca' d'Zan  
CU, series 11

1 box (.75 linear ft.)

**Curatorial Records of Rosilyn Alter, 1987 - 1992**

Curator of Italian Art  
CU, series 12

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

**Curatorial Records of Ileen Sheppard-Gallagher, 1989 - 1992**

Curator of Modern Art and Chief Curator  
CU, series 13

4 boxes (4 linear ft.)

**Circus Museum Records**

Administrative records, 1948 - 1992  
Arranged chronologically

10 boxes (5.75 linear feet)

A. Everett Austin, the first Director of the Museum, initiated the establishment of the Museum of the American Circus in 1948. Austin and the Board of Control saw that it was "an additional attraction, calling the public to the city. In purpose and content it also does its part in keeping alive the memory of the man who made Sarasota famous." There were no provisions in John Ringling's will to establish such a museum, which was first housed in the converted Ringling automobile garage. The Circus Museum was the first of its kind in the nation to document the history of the American circus.

This series includes the files of the Circus Museum curators, curatorial assistants, and Circus Museum volunteers from 1948-1992. The collection contains newspaper clippings, correspondence, photographs, assorted printed material, and museum records. While this collection reflects the curatorial records from the beginning to the present, most of the material covers the period from the mid-1970's to 1992.

CU, series 14

***Office of the Registrar, 1946 - 1979***

The role of the Registrar was described in a 1953 position description as having charge of all inventory, records of all outgoing and incoming loans, and attending to the details of borrowing or lending works of art. There has not always been an official Registrar employed by the Museum. The Museum Curators, the Director, or their secretaries performed the roles of Museum Registrar for many years until the 1970's. The bulk of the materials in this group are the official administrative



files of the exhibitions held at the Museum. Inventories are available in the Archives.

### **Administrative Files**

Administrative records, 1946 - 1980

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject alphabetically

This series are a few scattered administrative files generated or gathered by former Registrars and does not completely reflect all the business conducted by the Museum Registrars. Some of the records of interest that are in this group are the various inventories and lists from 1946-1955 and a "Registrars Procedure Manual." The file on Julius Böhler, the art dealer who worked with John Ringling, contains his report to the Board of Control on the condition of the collections in 1948 in which he asks for greater conservation assistance of the Ringling art collection. The conservation files in this series contain correspondence and lists documenting some of the work done by conservators prior to the establishment of a conservation laboratory, including records from Edward Korany and Caesar Diorio.

RG, series 01

### **Canceled Exhibition Files**

Exhibition files, 1969 - 1983

2 boxes (.75 linear ft)

Arranged chronologically

This series consists of correspondence and other items relating to canceled exhibitions that were worked on and then dropped for various reasons.

RG, series 02

### **Exhibition Files**

Exhibition files, 1946 - 1983

51 boxes (22.5 linear ft)

Arranged chronologically by exhibition

The Exhibition Files are an important source for information about the exhibition activities at the Museum since 1946. Correspondence between former Directors and Curators and other museums, artists, and members of professional organizations provide significant information not only about the exhibitions themselves, but also about the intellectual climate that was prevalent at the time. Included in most of the Exhibition Files are correspondence, insurance records and damage reports, catalogs, checklists, captions, invitations, photographs, newspaper clippings and press releases. An extensive inventory is available for this collection.

RG, series 04



## ***Education Office, 1966 - 1987***

While officially established much later as a department within the museum, educational programs started with the first Director in 1946. Between 1946 and 1953, all educational programming was done by either the Director or by curators in the form of seminars. By 1953, the Museum Librarian was conducting guided tours for classes and summer art study classes for elementary students. The Department has been responsible for tours, docent training and supervision, circulating exhibits, special educational programs and events. These records also document the statewide and community outreach programs. While this is not a comprehensive collection of records for the years covered, it is representative of the activities, programs, and events of the Department. Records in this group include correspondence, reports, notes, program files, and statistics. Inventories are available in the Archives.

### **Administrative Files, 1985 - 1987**

Arranged by subject  
EO, series 01

1 box (1 linear ft.)

### **Affiliate Program Files, 1978 - 1986**

Arranged by subject  
EO, series 02

11 boxes (5.5 linear ft.)

### **Associate & SWAP Programs, 1975 - 1981**

Arranged by subject  
EO, series 03

1 box (.75 linear ft.)

### **Docent & Exhibition Information, 1978 - 1986**

Arranged by type of record

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

This series contains the exhibition guidebooks, tour information, and handbooks produced by the Department for the Museum docents.

EO, series 04

### **Teacher Education Information Program Files, 1976 - 1987**

Arranged by program

3 boxes (1.5 linear ft.)

Contained in this series are suggested pre-tour class activities and tours that were developed by the Department for exhibitions at the Museum and programs created on special subjects such as Ca' d'Zan, the circus, and the Medieval fair.

EO, series 05

### **Workshops, 1984 - 1986**

Arranged chronologically

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

These are the administrative files for workshops that were designed by the Education Department and offered to museum professionals, teachers, and the community.

EO, series 06

### **Circulating Exhibitions, 1976 - 1986**

Alphabetical by exhibition

4 boxes (2 linear ft.)

These administrative files document the statewide outreach of the Museum through the Circulating Exhibition program. Included in these files are press kits, educational programs, and checklists.

EO, series 09

### ***Finance Office, 1944 - 1953***

These financial records from early years of the Museum include journals, ledgers, expense reports, receipts from admissions, and check stubs. Other financial records can be found in the Board of Control Minutes.

### **Attendance Records & Receipts**

Records, 1932 - 1947

4 vols; 1 ledger (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

These volumes record the attendance and the gate receipts at the Museum. The total attendance at the Museum for the fourteen years was 546,859 with the average yearly attendance of 39,061.

FI, series 01

### **Cash Receipts & Disbursements**

Records, 1946 - 1947

2 vols (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

These volumes record the deposits and disbursements from the Ringling Museum Revolving Fund.

FI, series 02

### **Audit Records**

Reports, 1946 - 1994

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

This series consists of the audits of the Museum funds by the State Auditing Department and by outside firms contracted to audit the Foundation's accounts.

FI, series 03

### **Museum Directives**

Records, 1984 - 1994

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged by directive number

FI, series 04

## **OFFICE OF SPECIAL AUDITOR**

### **John M. Garland**

Administrative records, 1944 - 1946

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

John M. Garland worked for the Executors of the Estate of John Ringling during the time the property was in litigation in the 1940's and was named the Special Auditor of the property by R.A. Gray, Florida Secretary of State, in February 1946. As the Auditor, he deposited gate receipts and handled the payroll that needed to be issued until a Director for the Museum was appointed. The few records in this series consist of general financial records, miscellaneous correspondence, information on the Museum collections and facilities, payroll, and some information about Ringling's property holdings outside of Florida.

FI, series 05

## **OFFICE OF BUSINESS MANAGER, 1946 - 1953**

These records reflect the wide range of duties conducted by the Business Managers. The role of the Business Manager was to be responsible for all financial matters relating to the Museum, to prepare and submit monthly statements of admissions, receipts, and expenditures to the Board of Control, the Director, and Department Heads, to act as a purchasing agent for all non-art related Museum properties, to maintain a complete inventory of the physical property and supplies, to be responsible for the buildings and the grounds, to supervise Admissions, Residence and Sales staff, and to prepare the Annual Budget.

### **J. W. Blanding**

Administrative records, 1946 - 1953

2 boxes (2 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

In 1946, the Board of Control named Col. J. W. Blanding as Business Manager for the Ringling Museum at the same time the Museum's first Director was hired. As the first Business Manager, the records in this series reflect Blanding's many and varied duties at the Museum. Blanding's records reveal the establishment of many of the first administrative programs of the Museum, such as the Museum Plaza, signs for the Museum, seawall work, the Board of Control, and the Asolo Theater. They are significant because of the generous examples of correspondence on various subjects, particularly his business with A. Everett Austin.

FI, series 06

### **C. A. Selby**

Administrative records, 1953

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

After the retirement of Colonel J.W. Blanding in December, 1952, C. A. Selby, Chief Accountant for the Board of Control, assumed the duties and responsibilities of the operation of the business office of the Museum. On January 2, 1953, Selby became the official business manager; however, he was on the staff of the museum



by the later part of December, 1952. The records reflect some of the business conducted in 1953, but are in no way complete. Some of the subjects covered are the Museum's budget, correspondence with Henri Dorra, facilities and property questions.

FI, series 07

### **John E. Montgomery**

Records, 1954 - 1955

1 folder

Arranged chronologically

The records in this series deal with the final disposition of the estate silver with the North family.

FI, series 08

## ***Committee & Council Records, 1958 - 1992***

The Museum committee files contain the minutes and reports from the established staff committees. The Members Council and Modern Arts Council records contain minutes and correspondence of these Museum member groups.

### **Museum Committee Files**

Minutes, 1986 - 1992

2 boxes (2 linear ft.)

Arranged by committee, then chronologically

MC, series 01

### **Members Council**

Administrative files, 1967 - 1985

7 boxes (2.75 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

On March 24, 1958, a Members Council of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art was officially incorporated. The primary aims of this new volunteer arm of the Museum were to increase its community participation in the activities of the Museum, to aid the Director and staff, to help financially in areas where State funds were not available, and to promote the Museum. Included in this series are Members Council Articles of Incorporation, Board minutes, financial records, and special events files.

MC, series 02

### **Modern Arts Council**

Administrative files, 1988 - 1989

4 folders

Arranged by subject

The Modern Arts Council was established in 1988 to promote the appreciation of modern art and to help acquire works of modern art for the Museum.

Mss 93.02

## ***Museum Publications, 1948 - 1994***

The Museum has been publishing material about the collections since the State took ownership of the Ringling estate. The Archives is the repository for all copies of Museum publications as well as copies of publications about the Museum. All this material is arranged chronologically and there are inventories available in the Archives.

### **The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art Newsletter**

Newsletters, 1964 - 1994	2 boxes (1 linear ft.)
PS, series 01	

### **Annual Reports**

Reports, 1993 - 1994	1 box (.25 linear ft.)
PS, series 02	

### **Guides to the Collections and Buildings**

Guides, ca. 1948 - 1992	2 boxes (2 linear ft.)
PS, series 03	

## ***Public Relations, 1946 - 1992***

Press releases from the 1960's and records of the Public Relations Department comprise this record group. This includes correspondence, reports, memos, and press packets for Museum exhibitions and special events. For many years the Museum subscribed to a clipping service and the clippings were pasted into scrapbooks. Later, a selection of published articles on the Museum would be photocopied, bound, and distributed to the Board of Trustee members.

### **Museum Scrapbooks**

Scrapbooks, 1946 - 1948; 1952 - 1988	89 vols (20 linear ft.)
PR, series 01	

### **Press Books**

Press books, 1987 - 1992	39 vols (3 linear ft.)
PR, series 02	

### **Museum Brochures**

Brochures, ca. 1948 - 1992	1 box (.25 linear ft.)
PR, series 03	

### **Calendars**

Calendars, 1960 - 1987	1 box (1 linear ft.)
PR, series 04	

### **Records of Florence Gillmore**

Public Relations, 1964 - 1974	6 boxes (6 linear ft.)
PR, series 05	

**Records of Robert Ardren**

Public Relations, 1976 - 1989  
PR, series 06

9 boxes (9 linear ft.)

**Records of Patricia Buck**

Public Relations, 1989 - 1993  
PR, series 07

3 boxes (3 linear ft.)

### ***Sales Department, 1946 - 1994***

The material contained in this record group are examples of postcards, slides, calendars, and other items sold in the Museum Shops over the years. The postcard collection is especially important as it documents the changes in the grounds, buildings, and exhibition space.

**Museum Sales Material**

Ephemera, 1946 - 1994  
Arranged by type of material  
SD, series 01

2 boxes (1.5 linear ft.)

### ***Building & Architectural Records, 1924 - 1990***

Most of the blueprints in this records group were generated by the architects brought in to build or renovate Museum buildings. The majority of the prints are from 1963 - 1988.

**Blueprints & Drawings**

Architectural records, 1924 - 1989  
Arranged by building, then chronologically

1381 drawings  
(75 linear ft.)

Contained in this series are the original drawings for Ca' d'Zan and the Art Museum as well as blueprints for other Ringling land holdings and the Ringling yacht.

BU, series 01

**Specifications, Surveys & Reports**

Reports, 1954 - 1987  
Arranged chronologically  
BU, series 02

7 boxes (3.25 linear ft.)



**Facility Projects**

Records, 1952 - 1989

9 boxes (4 linear ft.)

Arranged by building

This series contains records that document work done on the buildings and also includes files relating to the work done by SG2 from 1981 to 1989.

BU, series 03

**Administrative Files**

Records, 1954 - 1990

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

BU, series 04

**Building Information**

Records, 1924 - 1992

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Arranged by building

This series is made up of copies of reports from a variety of sources concerning the buildings on the Museum complex.

BU, series 05

**Real Estate Records**

Records, 1924 - 1972

1 box (1 linear ft.)

Arranged by property

The real estate records in this series are copies of deeds of lands adjoining the Ringling Estate or of property purchased for the expansion of the Museum to create the plaza in 1952.

BU, series 06

## ◆ *Photographic Collections*

### **General Circus Photographs**

Photographs, 1880 - 1960

4693 prints and 1648 vintage prints; 100 copy negatives

(17 linear ft.)

Organized into the following series: I. Prints; II. Vintage prints; III. Oversize; IV. Copy  
Negatives

The General Circus Photographic Collection contains images depicting all aspects of the American Circus from the 1880's to the 1960's. The collection was begun in 1948 when the Circus Museum first opened and has been added to from many different sources. Some photographs are publicity shots for the various performers and acts represented, while others are candid shots of various day to day circus activities and special events. Most of the collection is black and white standard processing with few color prints. There are only one hundred copy negatives for the entire collection.

The images are divided into nine general subgroups depicting the major topics in the circus. Within these groups, the photos are broken into categories either generically or by specific proper name of the group, performer, animal, or activity. An inventory is available in the Archives.

Images that represent photographic processes before 1945 have been physically separated into another series, Vintage Prints, to protect the more delicate and sometimes historically significant materials from being subject to over-handling. There are over 1600 prints in the Vintage series.

PG01

### **Museum Photographs**

Photographs, 1946 - 1988

1000 prints; 100 oversize materials; 300 slides; 300 color transparencies; 1000 negatives  
(12 linear ft.)

Organized into the following series: I. Prints; II. Oversize materials; III. Slides; IV. Color  
transparencies; V. Negatives

The Museum Photographic Collection contains images depicting the architecture, staff, and special activities of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. It also provides documentation of the many changes to the complex over the years. Most of the images in this collection were taken by photographers who worked for the Museum on either a contractual or full-time basis. An inventory is available in the Archives.

The Exhibition Files of the Registrar's Office contain the photographs of exhibitions and exhibition openings. The Registrar's Office has all images of items in the Museum's collections, including all photographs of architectural details, furniture and statuary. The Director of Communications has photographs of more recent Museum events and publicity photographs.

PG03

### **Ringling Family Photographs**

Photographs, ca. 1920 - 1930

521 prints; 62 Oversize

8 albums (7 linear ft.)

Organized into the following series: I. John and Mable Ringling; II. Ringling Family & Friends; III. Estate & Other Properties; IV. Oversize

This collection contains the photographs of the Ringlings, various family members, friends, and properties. The collection contains the few personal photographs that depict John and Mable Ringling enjoying their Sarasota home. Only one third of the almost six hundred photographs are of John and Mable; the majority are of various other family members, including John Ringling North, Henry North, Ida North, John Ringling's brothers, parents, and various nieces and nephews. Within each series, further breakdowns have been made by persons, places or things; however, there are many unidentified people and places. The three photographic albums are important resources for documenting Ca' d'Zan and the grounds of the Museum. An inventory of the collection is available in the Archives.

PG05

### **Glasier Glass Plate Negatives Collection**

Photographs, 1890 - 1930

1850 glass plates (1450 8"x10" & 400 5"x7"); 1800 copy prints; 500 copy negatives (15 linear ft.)

Organized into the following series: I. Glass plates; II. Prints; III. Copy negatives

Researchers interested in late 19th- and early 20th- century photography and popular culture will find the Glasier Collection an important resource for the American circus, Wild West shows, and Native Americans. The Glasier Collection includes practically every aspect of circus operations. There are images of the circus owners, administrators, ushers, and ticket sellers. There are also shots of concession stands, cook houses, wagons, the Midway, train cars, and the exterior and interior of the Big Top. The photographs of circus performers and animal trainers consist of many action shots of performances, as well as posed shots. The Native American images are primarily posed shots (such as a portrait of Iron Tail, whose profile is on the buffalo nickel). The Native costumes are clearly identifiable; personal names and tribal affiliations for many pictures are listed.



The glass plates are in numerical order while the prints are arranged in eleven subject groups and then placed in numerical order within these groups. There are 500 polyester copy negatives arranged by plate number. An index is available in the Archives.

Frederick Whitman Glasier (1866 - 1950) opened the Glasier Art Studio and Museum in the Brockton apartment where he and his wife lived. It was at his studio that he worked, exhibited his photographs, and sold copies of his prints. Glasier's portrait style is typical of the commercial photography of the time: the personality and presence of the subject are presented directly to the viewer.

PG06

### **Silberstein Photographic Collection**

Photographs, 1973 - 1988

46 color prints; 21 black & white prints; 522 slides; 10 negatives

2 loose leaf notebooks (.5 linear ft)

Arranged by artist

Part of this collection of photographs by Jan Silberstein, a Sarasota photographer, document the process of installing modern art exhibitions at the Ringling Museum. The rest of the collection consists of images of nationally and internationally known artists working in Florida, such as John Chamberlain, Robert Rauschenberg, Philip Pearlstein, David Budd, and Syd Solomon. An index is available to the collection.

Mss 93.02

## ◆ *Circus Collection*

### **The Circus in Sarasota**

It was John Ringling who made Sarasota synonymous with the circus. With the offer of 155 acres, Ringling moved the winter quarters of the circus from Bridgeport, Connecticut (the old Barnum & Bailey Circus winter quarters), to Sarasota where it would remain for over thirty years. The area was bordered by the Bobby Jones Golf Course and north of the intersection of Fruitville and Beneva roads. The City of Sarasota collected no taxes on winter quarters in exchange for advertising space ("Sarasota: The Land of Opportunity") in the *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Programs* that were read by millions each season.

On Christmas Day, 1927, the Sarasota winter quarters opened its doors to visitors. Over the years, hundreds of thousands of people visited winter quarters. Circus performers began to make their homes in Sarasota -- the Cristianis, Concellos, Merle Evans, Lou Jacobs, Emmett Kelly, LaNorma, Unus, the Wallendas, Zacchinis, and became an integral part of the community. In 1956, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus stopped using canvas and became an arena show. The need for an immense winter quarters was gone; gone too were the street parades and the need for the elaborately carved parade wagons. Over the next few years, the winter quarters became a grave yard for the abandoned circus cars and wagons and in January, 1960, the Ringling winter quarters were moved to Venice, Florida, where it would remain for the next thirty years. Sarasota and the circus, however, remain forever linked.

There were no provisions in John Ringling's will to establish a circus museum on the grounds of the Museum. In 1948, A. Everett Austin, the first Director of the Museum and a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, conceived the idea of a Museum celebrating the American Circus. Austin and the Board of Control saw that it was "an additional attraction, calling the public to the city. In purpose and content it also does its part in keeping alive the memory of the man who made Sarasota famous." First housed in the converted Ringling automobile garage, the Ringling Museum of the American Circus was the first museum of its kind to document the rich history of the circus in the United States. With so many circus people living in the immediate area, the collection grew quickly. Because of this, the Ringling Museum has a fine circus collection documenting the rich history of the circus. The collection includes rare handbills and art prints, circus paper, business records, wardrobe and spec. costumes, performing props, as well as all types of circus equipment from parade and utility wagons to tent poles and bail rings.

All of the circus artifacts (wagons, wardrobe, props, circus paper, prints and engravings) are under the jurisdiction of the Museum's Registrar and information about these items and prints can be obtained through the Registrar's Office. Most of the paper, non-art, records are under the jurisdiction of the Archivist.

## ***Circus Route Books, Cards & Sheets***

### **Route Books**

1882 -1969

8 boxes (4 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

Route books are extremely useful in identifying people who worked on circuses and the routes taken by a circus during any season. A collection of Route Books for the Barnum & Bailey Circus and a run of the Ringling Route Books from the 1936 to the late 1960's are some of the important volumes in the collection. An inventory is available in the Archives.

CM 280

### **Henry Barnum's Route Book**

1856

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

This handwritten volume contains the route for the Herr Driesbach & Cos. Menagerie & S. P. Stickney & Co. Circus for the season of 1856.

CM 280.200

### **Route Cards & Sheets**

1897 - 1976

4 boxes (2 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

This collection has a wide range of circus Route Cards that is not limited to only the Ringling show. An inventory of the Route Cards and Sheets is available in the Archives.

CM 280.100

## ***Circus Programs***

### **Circus Programs**

Programs, 1805 - 1994

14 boxes (7 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

The collection contains a wide range of circuses & wild west shows, excluding the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. While the majority of the programs are from the turn of the century, there are some fine programs from the latter half of the 1800's. There are programs from the Sailor and Showfolks circuses, as well as other Sarasota circuses. An inventory is available in the Archives.

CM 270



**Ringling Bros. &****Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Programs**

Programs, 1911 - 1992

10 boxes (4 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

An inventory of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus programs is available in the Archives.

CM 270

***Press Clippings Books & Clippings*****Barnum & Bailey Press Clippings Books**

Press clippings, 1892; 1894 - 1916

34 vols (10 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

These volumes cover not only the American seasons of the Barnum & Bailey Circus, but also the European tour. While some of the clippings record the American view of the European tour, many of the volumes contain clippings from the European papers and are in French, German, and Hungarian.

CM 240.251

**Barnum, Cole, Hutchinson and Barnum & London**

Press clippings, 1886

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

CM 240.289

**Barnum, Cole, Hutchinson & Cooper**

Press clippings, 1887

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

CM 240.294

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Press Clippings Books**

Press clippings, 1896 - 1897; 1899; 1900; 1906; 1934 - 1956; 1958

60 vols. (19 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

The Press Clippings Books that were compiled from 1934 - 1956 include only the clippings from the New York stand of the circus, not for the entire season. Included in this collection is the Press Clippings Book for "Spangles" and the tours to Havana, Cuba, of 1951 and 1954.

CM 240.201

**Clippings**

Clippings, 1718 - 1944

267 items

Arrangement by accession number

Drawn from many sources, this collection includes newspapers and newspaper and magazine clippings that relate to the circus. Some of the oldest material is from the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, *Boston Daily Times*, and *Boston Gazette*. Most of the material is from New England papers; however, there are many early clippings from English papers. An inventory to this collection is available in the Archives to this collection.

CM 240

## *Circus Business Records*

### **Al G. Barnes**

Daily Statements, 1937  
CM 290.71

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

### **Barnum & Bailey**

Cash books, 1890 - 1896; 1900 - 1902  
Arranged chronologically  
CM 290.01

19 vols. (2 linear ft.)

### **Barnum & Bailey**

Ledgers and Day Books, 1898 - 1900  
Arranged chronologically  
CM 290.15

8 vols. ( 1.5 linear ft.)

### **Barnum & Bailey**

Receipts, 1899 - 1902  
Arranged chronologically  
CM 290.18

6 vols. (.75 linear ft.)

### **Barnum & Bailey**

Pay Roll, 1900 - 1902  
Arranged chronologically  
CM 290.29

2 vols. (.5 linear ft.)

### **Barnum & Bailey**

Statement of Printing, 1899  
Arranged by lithographic company  
CM 290.19

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

### **Barnum & Bailey**

Letterpress book, 1897  
Arranged chronologically

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

The 156 letters in this volume were written by George O. Starr, one of the Directors of the Barnum & Bailey Show.

CM 290.14

### **Bartok Circus**

Contracts, 1967  
Arranged alphabetically  
CM 291.50

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

### **Hagenbeck-Wallace**

Daily statements, 1923 - 1925; 1928  
Arranged chronologically  
CM 290.46-47

3 vols. (1.5 linear ft.)

**Hagenbeck-Wallace & John Robinson**

Ledgers, 1926 - 1927

1 vol. (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged alphabetically

The ledgers contain information on the income received from ads and expenditures, such as telephone costs and salaries paid to performers.

CM 290.48

**John Robinson Circus**

Daily statements, 1928

1 vol. (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

CM 290.50

**John Robinson Shows**

Winter quarters record book, 1925 - 1928

1 vol. (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

The Robinson winter quarters record book, no. 21, contains information about the costs involved in running a circus, as well as the winter quarters in West Baden, Indiana. The ledger also lists the zoo receipts for 1926 - 1927.

CM 290.49

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey**

City contracts, 1955

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged alphabetically

CM 296.123

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey**

Record of the legal adjuster, 1930 - 1955

4 boxes (2.5 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

Noyelles D. Burkhart (1908 - 1991) followed Herbert DuVal as the Legal Adjuster on the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus. DuVal would pay for the needed licenses in any city the circus would play, handle complaints from the townspeople, and take care of any accidents to circus personnel or townspeople. Included in this collection are the daily logs from the White Ticket Wagon for the Hagenbeck-Wallace Show (1930), Tom Mix Circus (1937), Ringling Show (1939 - 1955), and an Accident Log for the Ringling Show (1950). There is also material on the Hartford Circus Fire Disaster; included are clippings, legal documents, and a copy of the inquest minutes of 6 July 1944.

CM 290.65

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey**

Performers agreements, 1936 - 1947

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

CM 295.17

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey**

Railroad contracts, 1934; 1955

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged by voucher number

CM 296.132



## *Circus Plans & Blueprints*

### **Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Plans**

Blueprints, 1927 - 1954

50 blueprints

Arranged by subject

Contained in this series are the plans for winter quarter buildings and training rings, as well as Big Top plans and layouts.

CM 500.51

### **Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Blueprints**

Blueprints, 1932 - 1951

45 blueprints

Arranged by subject

The blueprints in this collection deal mostly with wagons. Included are Miles White's designs for the 1951 floats, plans for midway baggage wagons, the Gargantua car designed by the Carrier Corporation in 1938, and the Wedding float for the 1947 season.

CM 500.01

## *Manuscript Collections*

### **Black Collection**

Papers, 1878 - 1978

2 diaries (.25 linear ft.)

This collection contains material about May Wirth (1896 - 1978) who was part of an Australian circus family. One diary was written by May Wirth and the other was written by her mother, Marizles Wirth; the two diaries discuss their lives and travels. May Wirth made her American debut in 1912 at Madison Square Garden with the Barnum & Bailey Circus and would receive top billing as the "World's Greatest Rider" in the Ringling Show in 1917.

CM 1100.34-36

### **Jung Papers**

Papers, 1920 - 1965

5 boxes; 1 album

Arranged by subject

(4.5 linear ft.)

The Papers of Paul Jung who was a clown on the Ringling Show for 30 years include photographs, publicity materials, newspaper clippings, circus programs, circus paper, and advertisements.

Mss 90.07

### **Kelly Papers**

Papers, 1924 - 1979

4 boxes; oversize material

Arranged by type of record

(3 linear ft.)

The papers of Emmett Kelly, known to millions as the clown Weary Willie, include a rich collection of photographs, drawings by Kelly, and the manuscript copy of his autobiography, *Clown: My Life in Tatters and Smiles*.

CM 89.01

### **Hatch Manuscript**

Typescript manuscript, ca. 1959

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

This collection contains the unedited manuscript for the book *The Circus Kings* written by Henry Ringling North and Alden Hatch and checked by Robert Thrun. *The Circus King* relates anecdotes about circus performers and the Ringling family stories behind "The Greatest Show on Earth."

CM 330.16

### **McCarty Papers**

Papers, 1929 - 1969

3 albums (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged by circus

John F. McCarty was a piano instructor and orchestra pit piano player; he was also a circus fan who took photographs of circuses that played in and around Torrington, Connecticut. The three albums in this collection contain 262 photographs of the following shows: Kelly-Miller; Sells-Grey; Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros.; Gentry Bros.; Hunt; King Bros.; Wallace; Christy Bros.; as well as the Ringling show.

Mss 93.01

### **McKennon Papers**

Papers, ca. 1960 - 1992

6 boxes (5 linear ft.)

Arranged by type of record

Joseph W. McKennon is an internationally known circus and carnival lecturer, writer, and historian, as well as a veteran showman. The clippings, posters, correspondence, photographs, postcards, circus promotional material, articles, and manuscripts document not only the history of the circus and carnival, but also record Mr. and Mrs. McKennon's donation of time and talent to the Ringling Circus Museum over the course of more than twenty years.

Mss 94.02

### **Plowden Manuscript**

Typescript manuscript, 1967

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

This collection contains the edited manuscript for the book *Those Amazing Ringlings and Their Circus* written by Gene Plowden, a journalist with Associated Press who wrote many articles and books on the circus.

CM 330.04

### **Waite Scrapbook**

Papers, 1929 - 1945

1 box (.25 linear ft.)

Arranged chronologically

Kenneth R. Waite, a boss clown, did his clowning in pantomime and was known for his trick uniforms. His trademarks were oversized hats and shoes (more than two feet long). The scrapbook contains newspaper clippings, photographs, and promotional material about Waite's career as a clown during the 1920's to 1940's.

Mss 92.01

## ***Other Circus Related Material***

### **Circus Tickets, Passes & Script**

Tickets, 1826 - 1978

310 items

Arranged by circus

This collection contains tickets, free passes, railroad script, annex tickets, press passes, and annual passes, as well as dukies (meal tickets) for winter quarters. While there are many tickets from the Ringling Show, many other circuses such as, Dailey Bros., Bartok, John Robinson, are represented. An inventory is available in the Archives.

CM 250

### **Circus Letterhead**

Stationery, ca. 1900 - 1964

1 box (.5 linear ft.)

Arranged by circus

The stationery used by circus owners and performers was as eye-catching as the promotional posters that were used to announce the arrival of the circus. The color and art work were designed to capture the attention of the reader immediately; but, the most prominent feature was the name of the circus or performer.

CM 300

### **Circus Postcards & Holiday Cards**

Cards, ca. 1900 - 1977

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Arranged by subject

CM 320



## ***Appendix A:***

### **A CHRONOLOGY OF THE MUSEUM & THE RINGLING FAMILY**

- 1847 August Rüngeling (1826 - 1898) migrated from Canada to the United States. In 1852, he married Marie Salomé Juliar (1823 - 1907) in Chicago. They had eight children: Albrecht (Albert), 1852 - 1916; Augustus (Gus), 1854 - 1907; Otto, 1857 - 1911; Alfred Theodore (Alf T.), 1863 - 1919; Charles, 1864 - 1926; John, 1866 - 1936; Henry, 1868 - 1918; and Ida, 1874 - 1950.
- 1866 On May 31, John Nicholas Ringling was born in MacGregor, Iowa.
- 1882 The Ringling family moved back to Baraboo, Wisconsin. With four other brothers, John began his circus career in the Ringling Brothers' Classic and Comic Concert Company. In 1884, Old Yankee Robinson & Ringling Brothers Great Double Shows began the Ringling tent show. The great circus showman, Yankee Robinson, died at the end of the season. It would be the last time the Ringling name would have second billing.
- 1890 Ringling Circus became a railroad show -- 16 cars and 2 advance cars.
- 1903 Bailey bought jointly with the Ringling Bros. half interest in the Forepaugh-Sells Circus with winter quarters in Columbus, Ohio.
- 1905 John Ringling married Mable Burton on December 29 in Hoboken, New Jersey; she was born in 1875 in Fayette County, Ohio.
- 1907 James A. Bailey's widow sold to the Ringling Bros. the other half of the Forepaugh-Sells Circus and the Barnum & Bailey Circus.
- 1909 While staying in Tarpon Springs, the Ringlings visited Sarasota for the first time by boat.
- 1912 The Ringlings bought the C. N. Thompson home on Shell Beach (twenty acres) in Sarasota from Ralph Caples. They spent a few months during the winter in Sarasota. The following year, Charles Ringling bought the adjacent property.
- 1919 On March 29, the first performance of the combined shows, Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus -- The Greatest Show on Earth, was held in New York's Madison Square Garden.
- 1920 The Florida development boom began. The "Tin Can Tourists of the World" were organized at DeSoto Park.

- 1922 In New York, John Ringling met Julius Böhler, a Munich art dealer, in New York who advised Ringling in many of his art purchases.
- 1924 John and Mable Ringling announced plans to build a \$225,000 home on their Sarasota estate. Dwight Baum was the architect; Willy Pogany painted two ceilings in the house. The Ringlings toured Europe. A real estate boom swept Florida.
- 1925 John Ringling established Sarasota's first radio station in the John Ringling Hotel. The construction of the causeway across Sarasota Bay was begun; it was completed in 1926. Ringling started to collect paintings; within the period of six years, 1925 - 1931, the Ringlings bought over 600 paintings.
- 1926 Ringling purchased paintings in Germany and England, where he purchased the Rubens cartoons. He began a number of real estate projects in Sarasota. Finished in time for the holidays, John and Mable celebrated their first Christmas in Ca' d'Zan; the final cost was \$1.5 million. The Florida land boom collapsed.
- 1927 The Ringling Museum of Art was established and construction was begun; the architect, John H. Phillips, planned an Italian-style palazzo. Most of the building would be completed by 1928. Ringling began drilling for oil in south Sarasota County. Winter quarters were moved to Sarasota in November.
- 1929 Mable Burton Ringling died on June 8 in New York. John Ringling purchased the American Circus Corporation. Al Smith, the unsuccessful presidential candidate, visited Sarasota and toured Ca' d'Zan and the Art Museum.
- 1930 The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art officially opened in March for one day. John Ringling married Emily Haag Buck in December in Jersey City, New Jersey; they subsequently divorced in 1936.
- 1931 In March, the Art Museum was opened again for one week. The Museum would be formally dedicated in October.
- 1932 On January 17, the Art Museum was opened on a continuous basis during the Winter season. John Ringling fell ill with his first attack of thrombosis. The circus partnership was dissolved; Ringling continued as President with no duties.
- 1936 John Ringling died on December 2 in New York City. The Art Museum -- the art collection alone was valued at over 23.5 million -- and residence were willed to the people of Florida. Ida North and her son, John R. North, were named co-executors. Her other son, Henry Ringling North, was named a trustee of the estate. The Art Museum remained open to the public from 1936 - 1946.

- 1941 During the first four months, 20,000 visitors came to the Art Museum. The following year, the average attendance for the first four months of 1942 was 10 people per day despite the outbreak of World War II.
- 1946 After ten years of litigation, the Museum was transferred in February to the people of Florida and placed under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Control. A. Everett Austin was appointed Director of the Museum. He immediately embarked upon a program of restoration, modernization, and conservation. In December, Ca' d'Zan was opened to the public as a museum.
- 1947 Settlement was finally reached between the executors of the Ringling Estate and the State of Florida. Austin completed an initial restoration of the Art Museum that primarily involved painting the galleries.
- 1948 Dedicated to the history of the circus, the Museum of the American Circus opened in March. Austin assembled an exhibition of works by artists of the early decades of the 20th Century, "Masterpieces of Modern Painting." It opened in April and was the first significant exhibition of Modern Art in Florida and included Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso, Miro, Mondrian, Dali, and Berman. Austin purchased the first painting since John Ringling's death, Rubens portrait of *The Archduke Ferdinand*. Austin would purchase 25 paintings, as well as many decorative art pieces during his tenure as Director. Art Seminars with Florida State University were begun.
- 1949 A catalogue of the Ringling Paintings was published by William Suida.
- 1950 The Asolo Theater was purchased and was sent from Venice in July; originally from the Castle of Caterina Cornaro, the theater was built in the 1850's; it was reassembled in Gallery 21. Rubens' *Departure of Lot and His Family from Sodom* was lent to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Ida Ringling North died.
- 1952 The opening performance of the Asolo Theater was held on February 26. At the Art Museum, Children's Art classes were taught by Syd Solomon.
- 1954 Plans were begun for a separate building adjacent to the Art Museum for the Asolo Theater. The building would be built in 1955 - 1956 and completed in 1957.
- 1956 A major contemporary show from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, "A Half Century of Picasso" was exhibited at the Museum. The Museum remained open throughout the summer months for the first time. Through donations, the Museum received paintings by George Grosz, Karl Hofer, Käthe Kollwitz, and Franz Marc.
- 1957 Austin died and J. Kenneth Donahue was named Director in June. A Citizen's Committee formed to study the Museum. In April, the contemporary exhibition, "4



Florida Painters," was assembled at the Museum. The exhibition was seen as a milestone for Suncoast artists. Concern was raised over the legality of loaning works of art to the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee. The *Sarasota Herald Tribune* called it a dangerous precedent.

- 1958 The Asolo Theater was dedicated and the grand opening was held on January 19th. The Museum acquired prints by Henry Moore, Fernand Léger, Henri Matisse, Jean Arp, Max Beckman, Wassily Kandinski, Oscar Schlemmer, and Pablo Picasso. The Members Council was created to promote interest in the Museum. A successful suit was brought against the State Board of Control to prevent the loan of works of art from the Museum. Governor LeRoy Collins returned to the Museum items that had been on temporary loan at the Governor's Mansion.
- 1959 The Florida Legislature created the Board of Trustees for the Museum and the Board was given jurisdiction over the management of the Museum. The first appointed Board members were: George F. Higgins, W. F. Suggs, Carl Borein, Jr., Hugh McKean, and Karl Bickel. The Florida Legislature also passed a bill (Chapter 59-61) that empowered the newly created Board of Trustees to make temporary loans to "art museums and institutions of higher learning and the executive mansion in Tallahassee..." Winter quarters of the Circus were moved from Sarasota to Venice, Florida.
- 1961 Friends of Art was formed. The organization was composed of people interested in making substantial gifts to add to the Museum's collections.
- 1962 The Museum building was air conditioned. Two pieces of contemporary art were purchased: *Silent World* by Syd Solomon and *On the East Side* by Maurice Becker. Former First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, visited the Museum.
- 1963 The Board of Trustees affirmed the concept of a contemporary art collection for the Museum. Friends of the Ringling Museum of Art was established; however, no program was outlined.
- 1964 The Museum's newsletter was started. *Elevation* by Gaston Lachaise was the first piece of modern sculpture purchased for the Museum's modern collection.
- 1965 Curtis G. Coley was named Director of the Museum. The Florida Legislature approved an appropriation of \$470,000 for the construction of an additional wing.
- 1966 The West Wing was completed. It housed the new library, administrative offices, work rooms, and additional exhibition space. The 100th anniversary of John Ringling's birth was celebrated by the Museum with an exhibition entitled "Circus Reminiscence."

- 1968 The Board of Trustees authorized the establishment of the Museum Foundation.
- 1972 The Museum was accredited by the American Association of Museums.
- 1973 Richard Carroll was named Director of the Museum.
- 1978 The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art Foundation was incorporated.
- 1980 The 50th Anniversary Celebration of the opening of the Art Museum was held. The Museum complex was added to the National Register of Historic Buildings.
- 1985 Laurence Ruggiero was named Director of the Museum.
- 1986 In celebration of the 40th anniversary of state ownership, *Great Paintings from The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art* was published by Anthony F. Janson, Chief Curator, in conjunction with an exhibition which was held at the Museum and traveled to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.
- 1988 The Modern Art Council was established to promote appreciation of modern art at the Museum.
- 1989 The Circus Gallery was reinstalled.
- 1990 The Advisory Council for the museum was established.
- 1991 After a decade of effort, the Art Museum building was structurally restored, major architectural elements were restored to their original splendor, exhibition areas redesigned, and the major objects of the collection were reinstalled.
- 1992 David Ebitz was named Director of the Museum.
- 1993 The traveling exhibition *Strike a Pose* opened in Tallahassee at the Museum of Florida History in February. *The Departure of Lot and His Family from Sodom* by Rubens was loaned to the National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo for the *Study Exhibition: The Flight of Lot* that included two other Rubens paintings depicting the same subject.
- 1994 The first Circus Gala was held at the Museum. The largest monetary gift ever donated to the Museum was given by Joseph and Marian McKennon of Sarasota. Beginning on a multi-year project for the restoration of Ca' d'Zan, a schematic design proposal was commissioned by the Museum from Ann Beha Associates of Boston, Massachusetts, and a Capital Campaign Committee was established for the restoration project.

## **Appendix B:**

### **LISTING OF TRUSTEES, ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS & KEY STAFF**

#### **DIRECTORS**

Austin, A. Everett	1946 - 1957
Donahue, J[ohn] Kenneth	1957 - 1964
Coley, Curtis G	1965 - 1972
Carroll, Richard	1973 - 1984
Daniels, John	1984
Acting Director	
Ruggiero, Laurence J.	1985 - 1992
Ebitz, David	1992 -

#### **FOUNDATION DIRECTORS**

Carroll, Mary Lou	1975 - 1984
Kerr, H. Douglas	1985 - 1992
Ebitz, David	1993 -
Director of the Foundation	
Brainerd, Susan	1993 -
Deputy Director for Development and Marketing	

#### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES & BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Addy, Emmet	1966 - 1971	Hussey, Elizabeth H.	1993 - 1997
Adler, Sydney	1983 - 1984	Jacobs, Arthur I.	1980 - 1983
Barnebey, Faith	1976 - 1977	Johnston, William W.	1970 - 1978
Barnett, Elliott B.	1980 - 1982	Kennedy, Rosario	1991 - 1993
Barnett, James S.	1994 - 1996	Knowles, Robert E.	1978 - 1983
Becker, Barbara A.	1989 - 1992	Koger, Ira M.	1983 - 1986
Bickel, Karl	1959 - 1965	Lochrie, Robert, Jr.	1983 - 1984
Binns, John	1965 - 1966	McKay, Herbert G.	1980 - 1984
Bishopric, George A.	1971 - 1980	McKean, Hugh F.	1959 - 1968
Brorein, Carl D., Jr.	1959 - 1970	Manson, John C.	1984 - 1988
Burson, William R.	1987 - 1989	Maxwell, Diane	1980 - 1984
Carr, Robert J.	1993 - 1996	Meyer, Judith	1987 - 1994
Christ-Janer, Arland F.	1991 - 1993	Padron, Eduardo J.	1986 - 1989
Clark, James C.	1968 - 1976	Peeples, Cecile S.	1993 - 1994
Culpepper, J. Blair	1984 - 1989	Penner, Grace	1980 - 1981
Dinkel, Nancy R.	1991 - 1995	Penner, Joseph	1981 - 1989
Dodson, Dorothy C.	1990 - 1993	Pritzker, Rhoda	1980 - 1984
Dreyfoos, Alex W., Jr.	1980 - 1986	Romano, Barbara B.	1978 - 1980
Duda, Emily J.	1990 - 1993	Savary, Mary T.	1987 - 1991
Dye, Dewey A., Jr.	1993 - 1994	Schall, Harry H.	1984 - 1987
Grubbs, J. Elven	1989 - 1992	Sedgeman, Judith	1984 - 1987
Haller, Mary Catheryn	1989 - 1992	Stefany, John E., Jr.	1984 - 1991
Hammons, Thomas L.	1992 - 1997	Stottlemeyer, Charles E.	1990 - 1991
Harris, Katherine	1991 - 1995	Strode, William C.	1976 - 1983
Heneman, Harlow J.	1971 - 1980	Sugg, W. D.	1959 - 1976
Higgins, George F.	1959 - 1967	Taylor, James A.	1993 - 1996
Holmes, Jacqueline B.	1987 - 1994	Van Antwerp, Marjorie	1967 - 1971
Hooks, Homer	1993 - 1997	Wilhelm, Jan	1990 - 1991



## ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Allen, Jane	1994 - 1998	Oden, Kenneth W.	1992 - 1993
Crouse, Jay	1990 - 1994	Radcliff, Alan	1993 - 1997
Force, Elizabeth E.	1992 - 1995	Sandefur, John E.	1992 - 1996
Foster, Jay L.	1990 - 1994	Sears, Carol	1992 - 1994
Glass, W. Reeder	1990 - 1993	Soran, Robert L.	1990 - 1992
Kasle, Gertrude	1992 - 1995	Wise, Phillip J.	1990 - 1991
Marcus, Richard E.	1992 - 1994		

## ARCHIVISTS

Sage-Gagné, Waneta	1990 - 1991
Walk, Deborah W.	1991 -
1994 -, Curator of the Circus Museum and Historical Resources	

## ART LIBRARIANS

Dean, Maud L.	1946 - 1953
Donahue, J[ohn] Kenneth	1953 - 1954
Donahue, Daisy C.	1954
Rubin, Catherine Ross	1957 - 1958
Hoersting, Frances Cheney	1959 - 1964
Strader, Helen Brown	1964 - 1965
Schmidt, Valentine L.	1965 - 1982
Morr, Lynell A.	1982 - 1993
McKee, Linda R.	1994 -

## CONSERVATORS

Nightwine, G. Theodore	1979 - 1983
Head Conservator	
Scalera, Michelle	1981 -
1981 - 1983, Assistant Conservator; 1983 -, Chief Conservator	
Henry, Mark	1987 - 1992
Frame Conservator	

### Conservators hired on a contractual basis

Buck, Richard D.	1946 - 1947
Weitzner, Julius H.	1946 - 1970
Diorio, Caesar R.	1947 - 1953
Korany, Edward O.	1954 - 1973
Worked winter months only	
Schubert, Bertha P.	1955 - 1957
Tapestry Restorer	
Hellyar, James Walker	1956
Assistant Restorer for the Circus Museum	
Krohn, Peter	1957 - 1959
Frame Restorer	
Guttman, Jacob	1964
Frame Restorer	
Michaels, Peter	1976 - 1978

## CURATORS

Sullivan, John L.	1949 - 1955
Curator, Museum of the American Circus	
Dorra, Henri	1953 - 1954
Donahue, J. Kenneth	1953 - 1956
1953 - 1954, Curatorial Librarian; 1955 - 1956, Curator	
Boice, C. L.	1955 - 1961[?]
Custodian, American Circus Museum	
Gilbert, Creighton	1959 - 1961
Assisted Director in Curatorial & Educational activities	
Parks, Robert Owen	1961 - 1967
Museum of Art Curator	
Miller, Mel	1959 - 1968
1959 - 1961, Curatorial Consultant for the Museum of the American Circus;	
Curator, Museum of the American Circus	
Moore, Anita (Mrs. French)	1964 - 1966
Curator of Cypriote Collection	
Nickel, Karl Morris	1967 - 1969
Assistant Curator	
McKennon, Joseph W.	1968 - 1969
Acting Curator, Ringling Museum of the Circus; 1969 - present, Curatorial	
Consultant to the Circus Museum	
Hurdle, John	1969 - 1980
Curator, Ringling Museum of Circus	
Ahlander, Leslie Judd	1970 - 1976
Curator of Education; 1972, Director, Education; 1974 - 1976, Assistant Curator of	
20th Century Collection	
Tomory, Peter A.	1970 - 1972
Curator of the Museum	
Sobotik, Kent	1970 - 1973
1970 - 1972, Assistant Curator; 1972 - 1973, Acting Curator & Curator of the	
Residence	
Tonkin, Robert B.	1973 - 1976
General Curator	
Wilson, William H.	1977 - 1983
Curator of European Art; 1980 - 1983, Curator of Collections	
Varian, Elayne H.	1977 - 1980
Curator of Contemporary Collection	
Duval, Cynthia	1979 - 1986
Curator of Decorative Arts; 1981, Curator of the Circus Museum; 1985 - 1986	
Curator of Ca' d'Zan	
Auping, Michael	1980 - 1984
Curator of 20th Century Art	
Williams, Jay	1981 - 1983
Senior Museum Curator, Head of Education	
Janson, Anthony F.	1984 - 1989
Curator of European Art Collection; Chief Curator	
Jacobs, Joseph	1986 - 1989
Curator of Modern Art	
Ormond, Mark	1984 - 1988
1984, Assistant Curator of 20th C. Collection; 1985, Acting Curator; 1987,	

Curator of Exhibits	
McDonough, Michael	1987 - 1991
1987 - 1990, Curator of Ca' d'Zan; 1990 - 1991, Curator of Historic Buildings	
Alter, Rosilyn	1987 - 1992
Curator of Italian Art	
Burkhart, Susan	1987 - 1988
Curator, Circus Gallery	
Ardren, Robert	1989 - 1992
Curator, Circus Gallery	
Shepherd-Gallagher, Ileen	1989 - 1992
Curator of Modern Art; Chief Curator	
Hansen, Elisa	1992 -
Acting Curator	
Walk, Deborah W.	1994 -
Curator of the Circus Museum and Historical Resources	
Ormond, Mark	1994 -
1994, Acting Curator; 1994 - . Deputy Director of Collections and Programs	

### HEADS OF EDUCATION

Creighton, Gilbert	1959 - 1961
Pierce, Patricia Ann	1962 - 1965
O'Brien, Judith E.	1965 - 1966
Yackey, Daphna S	1967 - 1969
Ahlander, Leslie J.	1970 - 1973
Curator of Education	
Hope, Marian A.	1973 - 1981
Museum Educational Programs Representative	
Czarniecki, Jim	1974 - 1976
Curator of Education & Museum Education Program Administrator	
Williams, Jay	1981 - 1983
Senior Museum Curator, Head of Education	
Daniels, John	1977 - 1982
Director for Programs	
Glazer, Nancy	1983 - 1987
Adams, Marianna	1987 - 1988
Hansen, Elisa	1989 -
Director of Adult & Academic Programs	
Hazelroth, Susan	1988 -
Director of School & Family Programs	

### FINANCE OFFICERS

Garland, John M.	1944 - 1946
Special Auditor	
Blanding, J. W.	1947 - 1952
Business Manager	
Selby, C. A.	1953
Business Manager	
Powers, W. F.	1953 - 1954
Controller	
Montgomery, John Earl	1954 - 1956
Business Manager	



Matherly, Ralph E. Controller	1954 - 1960
MacDonald, Charles E. Controller	1960
Harra, C. C. Controller	1960 - 1964
Brown, Thomas B. Controller	1965 - 1968
Hanley, John J. Business Manager	1968 - 1973
Gartenberg, Gerald Associate Director for Administration	1973 - 1983
Gotlob, Mark Associate Director for Administration	1983 - 1985
Boon, Gerald Chief Financial Officer	1983 - 1987
Bruening, Barbara 1987 - 1994, Chief Financial Officer; 1989 - 1994, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration	1987 - 1994
Lamm, Gary Deputy Director for Finance & Administration, Chief Financial Officer	1994 -

### **GRANTS COORDINATORS**

Benedetti, Susan	1986 - 1989
Moore, Patricia	1989 - 1994
Chenute, Tonya	1994

### **PERSONNEL OFFICERS**

Hanley, John J.	1968 - 1973
Berggren, Barbara	1973 - 1988
Melton, Diane	1989 -

### **MEMBERSHIP COORDINATORS**

Gallagher, Betty	1983 - 1984
Whitnack, Abby	1985 - 1987
Monteith, Kate	1988 - 1992
Ward, Angela Acting Membership Manager	1992 - 1993
Stevens, Jocelyn	1993 -

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTORS**

Murray, Marian Johnson	1948 - 1958
Harmon, Loren Foster	1958 - 1959
Bell, Barbara B.	1959 - 1963
Plover, Lois M. Acting Head of Publicity	1963 - 1964
Lowe, Stanley F.	1964
Gillmore, Florence	1964 - 1974
Bleyer, Jim	1974 - 1976
Ardren, Robert	1976 - 1989
Buck, Patricia R.	1989 - 1993
Linick, Barbara	1993 -

## REGISTRARS

Burnham, Bonnie	1969 - 1970
Halpern, Dee	1970
Telford, Elizabeth	1973 - 1980
Palmer, Pamela	1980 - 1988
Amatore, Edward	1990 -

## HEADS OF SECURITY

Morrison, Edwin M.	1964 - 1986
Rachels, Thomas	1976 - 1986
Assistant Head of Security	
Peterson, Ronald E.	1986 - 1990
Kersey, Nancy	1987 - 1990
Branks, Michael	1990 - 1991
Hady, Kenneth	1991 - 1992
Konz, Richard	1992 - 1993
Winney, Frank	1992, 1993
Acting Security Director	
Bagley, Susan	1993 -

## SUPERINTENDENTS OF BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Roan, Alfred Graham	1946 - 1955
Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds	
Montgomery, John Earl	1955 - 1956
Superintendent of Residence & Grounds	
Huntington, Don R.	1957 - 1967
Buildings Superintendent	
Laflin, Elwood K.	1959 - 1977
1959 - 1968, Grounds Foreman; 1968 - 1977, Groundskeeping Supervisor	
Shaw, Harold T.	1967 - 1969
Maintenance Supervisor	
Engles, Roger	1969 - 1978
Maintenance Superintendent	
McDaniels, William	1979 - 1986
Superintendent of Buildings and Maintenance Department	
Janowski, John	1978 - 1986
Grounds Supervisor	
Dull, James	1986 - 1992
Supervisor of Buildings	
Mallory, Ron	1986 -
Grounds Superintendent; 1993 - , Grounds Curator	
Ryder, Ray	1992
Buildings	
Driver, Shep	1992 - 1993
1992, Acting Buildings Superintendent; 1993, Buildings Superintendent	
Daley, Bill	1993 - 1994
Acting Buildings Superintendent	
Lyons, Chris	1994 -
Maintenance Supervisor	

## ***Appendix C:***

### **ARCHIVES MISSION, COLLECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES**

#### **Mission Statement of the Museum**

The Mission of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art is to enable a large and diverse audience to see, understand and take delight in a world-renowned collection of European painting and other works of art; the traditions of the circus; and the historic residence, theater, gardens, and grounds of the Museum. To carry out this mission, we develop and preserve the collections and historic facilities of the Museum; research, exhibit, and interpret those treasures for the people of Florida and all visitors to the Museum; and increase public awareness and appreciation of the Museum and its collections locally, nationally, and internationally.

#### **Mission of the Museum Archives**

If we are successful as archivists, the historical record will speak for this past in a full and truthful voice. And, as a society, we will be wiser for understanding who and where we have been.

John A. Fleckner, President SAA, 1990

I am interested in people, and this interest finds an outlet in history, particularly local history. History is more than information. It is the meaningful story of people in action.

Charlton W. Tebeau, Historian

The primary mission of the Archives is to maintain and further develop a regionally important archival collection of institutional records and manuscript materials that document the history of the Museum, the Ringlings, and the American circus. The Archives preserves those records deemed to be of permanent historical value and serves as an educational resource encouraging administrative and scholarly research on the institution. The Archives supports the educational and administrative goals of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art by collecting, arranging, preserving, and making available for use and exhibition, records, photographs, manuscripts, printed and related archival materials that document:

- the influence and impact of John and Mable Ringling on Sarasota
- the founding, development, and programs of the Museum
- the history of the American circus and its continuing impact on Sarasota.

The Archivist works in cooperation with other archival, historical, and cultural groups in supporting the preservation of Florida's cultural heritage, as well as informing the public of the importance of historical records collections.



# Collection Development Policy

## Introduction

A collection policy statement serves as a tool to determine what material should be collected by the Archivist to support the mission of the institution. The collection policy defines the scope and content of the archival collection and provides standards to insure consistency in the selection of materials for preservation. A written policy also informs staff, researchers, administrators, and trustees as to the scope and nature of the existing collection and the plans for continuing development and use of allocated resources. The policy is written in cooperation and coordination with other appropriate archival institutions. In order to reflect changing research trends, archival resources, as well as collection strengths and weaknesses, the collection policy is periodically reviewed.

The proposal for a complete history of John and Mable Ringling was first considered by the Board of Trustees in 1950; however, the project was never begun. In the early 1980's, Dr. David C. Weeks, historian and Museum docent, began assembling the Ringling papers from Ca' d'Zan and compiling information on the Ringlings' impact on Sarasota. Dr. Weeks and Lynell Morr, Museum Librarian, became convinced that an archives was needed to preserve not only the Ringling papers, but also the historical records of the Museum. The Archives of the Museum was finally proposed in 1987 by a motion of the Board of Trustees that instructed the Director of the Museum to "organize and preserve the records and other historical materials of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art." [*Minutes of the Board of Trustees*, January 12, 1987, p. 4] Through assistance from the State Archives and a grant from NHPRC, the Archives was established in 1989 and the first Archivist was hired in 1990.

The collections of the Archives of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art can be divided into three areas:

- Ringling Papers
- public records of the Museum
- manuscript collections.

As the State Art Museum under the office of the Secretary of State, the records of the Museum fall under the Public Records Law of Florida (Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes*) and the Archives acts as the repository for these public records.

When material offered to the Archives does not fall under the stated collecting areas, prospective donors will be referred to appropriate repositories whenever possible.

## **Collection Policy and Areas of Collecting**

### **The Ringling Papers**

This collection contains the records and papers of John Ringling that were found in the Art Museum and in Ca' d'Zan, the Ringling winter residence. The majority of the records date from 1929 to 1935 and reflect the impact of the stock market crash and Depression on Ringling's fortunes. The collection includes, but is not limited to: annotated auction catalogues; business records of oil, railroad, ranching, and real estate holdings; ledgers -- circus and non-circus; correspondence; photographs; and other related material.

The Archives will collect papers and manuscripts in the following areas:

- papers that complement existing records or fill gaps in the holdings of the Archives concerning John and Mable Ringling
- papers that document the Ringlings' art collection, their lives in and impact on Sarasota, business dealings, and real estate holdings
- papers and photographs of the art museum, Ca' d'Zan, and museum complex from 1911 to 1936 that complement existing archival holdings
- papers that document the impact of bringing winter quarters of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus to Sarasota.

The Archives will not collect:

- records directly relating to specific art purchases made by the Ringlings; the Registrar maintains these records in the Curatorial Files
- records relating to the Ringling family in Wisconsin.

### **Public Records**

The purpose of the public records collection is to document the history, organization, and programs of the Museum. Since The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art is under the office of Florida's Secretary of State, the Museum must comply with the Public Records Law of Florida (Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes*). In Statute, public records are defined as "documents, papers ... or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency." These records include, but are not limited to, the records of the Directors, administrative and program files, meeting minutes of the Board of Trustees and Board of Directors of the Foundation, tapes, blueprints, exhibition records, and audit reports.

The Archives of the Museum is mandated to collect public records in the following areas:

- records designated by law as having permanent historic or legal value
- records that reflect the organization, programs, and functions of the Departments of the Museum
- records of continuing value that are vital to the operations of the Museum because of their administrative, legal, or fiscal value
- records that provide the most accurate, understandable, or accessible source of information
- records that have intrinsic value based upon uniqueness, physical form, or age
- records that document the historical development of the Museum and its impact on the community.

The Archivist will assist in the identification of those records that are vital to the operations of the Museum because of their administrative, legal, or fiscal value.

### **Manuscript Collection -- Non-Governmental Records**

The Manuscript Collection of the Museum Archives contains records of private individuals and organizations that document the history of the Ringlings, the Museum, or the circus. This collection includes, but is not limited to: diaries; correspondence; journals; business records; scrapbooks; drawings; blueprints; photographs; slides; videos; portraits; postcards; and other related material.

The Archives of the Museum will collect manuscript collections and non-institutional records in the following areas:

- private papers of individuals whose public records are in the Archives
- private papers and records that complement existing records in the Archives, or those records that fill gaps in the institutional records of the Museum
- private papers that document the history, organization, and programs of the Museum
- records that document the history of the American circus and complement existing circus material
- private papers of individuals or families involved in the circus
- photographs or records that complement existing manuscript collections or public records in the Archives
- oral history transcripts and tapes that complement existing institutional and circus records in the Archives
- records documenting the history of winter quarters in Sarasota.



## PROCEDURES AFFECTING COLLECTION POLICY

### Records Transfer

All public records accessioned into the Archives must be properly scheduled through the Bureau of Archives and Records Management, Department of State. All manuscripts are subject to the conditions outlined in the Archives "Deed of Gift." No records will be accepted into the Archives without a completed transmittal or "Deed of Gift" form.

### Restrictions on Access or Use

All public records are open to inspection unless prohibited by law (Section 119.07, *Florida Statutes*). Manuscripts or other non-governmental records will be made available to researchers unless specifically noted on the "Deed of Gift" form. Any restrictions imposed by the donor(s) must have a date of termination. For the protection of its collections, the Archives also reserves the right to restrict access to records that are not arranged, are being processed, or are exceptionally valuable or fragile. In some cases, copies may be substituted for original documents.

### Deaccessioning or Disposition of Records

After reevaluation, manuscripts or non-government records that are determined to have no permanent or historical value will follow the policy of deaccessioning for the Museum. All public records must be disposed of in accordance with the "Public Records Law" (Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes*).

### Loan of Materials

Materials cannot be lent from the Archives for any purpose without authorization from the Director of the Museum. The Archives will accept the loan of records only when custody or donation is unobtainable or when the records are in immediate danger of being lost or destroyed. The acceptance of such material can only be made with the approval of the Director of the Museum and must have a date of termination.

### Tax Appraisal

The Archives cannot appraise donated material to determine their fair market value. An appraisal must be performed by an objective, qualified appraiser who is not connected with either the donor or Museum and must be hired for this purpose by the donor.

### Copyright

As stated in the "Deed of Gift," all materials transferred to the Archives become the sole and absolute property of the Archives. All rights, title, interest, copyright, and literary property rights that the donor(s) holds are transferred to the Archives. The Archives may exercise or transfer to a third party the right of quotation or publication. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine the status of copyright. The researcher is liable for any copyright infringement in the use of materials from the Archives.

## ***Appendix D:***

### **FLORIDA'S "PUBLIC RECORD LAW" & THE MUSEUM'S RECORDS TRANSFER POLICY**

As part of Florida's Department of State, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art falls under the provisions of the State's "Public Records Law" (Chapter 119, *Florida Statutes*). Florida's policies and procedures on public records and records administration are clearly enumerated in statute and administrative rule.

The general policy of the State concerning public records is that public records are open for a personal inspection (Chapter 119.01 and 119.07, *Florida Statutes*). Any public officer who knowingly restricts access to public records "is subject to suspension and removal or impeachment and, in addition, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083" (Chapter 119.02, *Florida Statutes*).

It is the responsibility of each agency to insure the protection of those records deemed to have permanent, historical value, as well as to provide for the systematic disposition of inactive records. No public record may be disposed of or removed without prior approval from the Records and Information Management Division, Bureau of Archives and Records Management, Department of State. Penalties are prescribed in *Statute* for the illegal destruction of public records (Chapter 119.10, *Florida Statutes*).

It is State law that the records created by staff members as a result of their work are State property and are not the property of the individual.

### **Transfer of Records to the Archives & Disposition of Inactive Records**

The Archives receives records through an established procedure. The Records and Information Management Division has instituted retention schedules for governmental records and the same schedules hold true for Foundation records. Other records will be judged on their evidential value, legal or fiscal value, historic and informational value, as enumerated in *Administrative Code*.

To transfer records to the Archives, departments must notify the Archivist, who will supply archival storage boxes and inventory sheets. It is the responsibility of each department in the Museum to pack and itemize records. No records will be transferred from any department to the Archives without properly completed forms and prior authorization. A "Work Order" must also be completed for transporting the records from the office to the Archives.

## DEFINITIONS CONCERNING PUBLIC RECORDS

**Agency** means any state, county, district, authority, or municipal officer, department, division, board, bureau, commission, or other separate unit of government created or established by law and any other public or private agency, person, partnership, corporation, or business entity acting on behalf of any public agency.

**Drafts** are materials that are precursors of governmental records and are not, in themselves, intended as final evidence of the knowledge to be recorded. Information in a form that is not intended to perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge of some type that is fully represented in the final product is a draft and not a public record.

**Duplicate or convenience records** means reproductions of record (master) copies prepared simultaneously or separately, which are designated as not being the official copy. Duplicate records with a retention of "obsolete, superseded or administrative value is lost" are not required to be submitted on a Records Disposition Request before disposal. Knowledge of disposal eligibility of these duplicate records is the responsibility of the Museum.

**Electronic records** mean any information recorded in machine readable form.

**General Records Schedules** means retention requirements issued by the Records & Information Management Division, Bureau of Archives & Records Management, Department of State.

**Intermediate records (processing files)** are temporary records used to create, correct, reorganize, update, or derive output from master data files. In the absence of such a final product, processing files constitute final evidence of the knowledge to be recorded and shall not be construed as intermediate files.

**Public records** means all documents, papers, letters, tapes, photographs, films, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency.

**Record (master) copy** means public records specifically designated as the official record.

**Record series** means a group of related documents arranged under a single filing system or kept together as a unit because they consist of the same form, relate to the same subject, result from the same activity, or have certain common characteristics.

**Supporting documents** means public records assembled or created to be used in the preparation of other records needed to trace actions, steps, and decisions covered in the final or record (master) copy.



## ***Appendix E:***

### **RECORDS RELATING TO THE ARCHIVAL HOLDINGS IN OTHER COLLECTIONS**

#### **Museum History:**

##### **Florida State Archives**

**904 487-2073**

##### **Department of Library and Information Services**

##### **Department of State, 500 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399**

The State Archives has the minutes of the Board of Control for State Institutions (the Board that managed the Museum before the creation of the Board of Trustees in 1959), the administrative correspondence of Governors Spessard Holland and Millard Caldwell that includes records on the Ringling estate, Ringling estate subject files (1931 - 1957) which document the legal aspects of the bequest, and fiscal files (1970 - 1975). Film footage of the Museum is located in the Florida Tourism Promotional films and photographs are in the Florida Photographic Collection.

##### **Sarasota Historical Resources**

**813 951-5444**

##### **701 Plaza De Santo Domingo, Sarasota, FL 34234**

The Department maintains newspaper clippings, an index to Sarasota obituary notices, photographs, Stephen Ball's circus photographs, microfilm copies of the County's early deeds, Minutes of the Sarasota County Commissioners (1921 -1958), City directories, local journals, maps, architectural drawings, runs of early Sarasota newspapers, and a collection of books on Sarasota and circus history.

##### **Selby Public Library**

**813 951-5501**

##### **1001 Blvd. of the Arts, Sarasota, FL 34234**

The Selby Library has vertical file material on circus history, a collection of books on the circus, and the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* on microfilm.

#### **Ringling Family**

##### **Sauk County Historical Society**

**608 356-1001**

##### **531 Fourth Avenue, Post Office Box 651, Baraboo, WI 53913**

The Historical Society has a varied collection of moderate size that relates to the Ringling family and to the circus. The collection contains family and circus photographs, circus programs, costumes, receipt books, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and information on the Ringling buildings in Baraboo.

## **Circus Resources**

**The Barnum Museum** 203 331-1104

**800 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604**

The Museum contains P. T. Barnum records and memorabilia, books on circus history, Tom Thumb and Jenny Lind memorabilia.

**Bridgeport Public Library** 203 576-7417

**925 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604**

The Historical Collections Department of the Library has a collection of circus material focused on Barnum and his associates and their impact on Bridgeport.

**Circus City Festival Museum** 317 472-3918

**154 North Broadway, Peru, IN 46970**

The Library of the Museum has a collection of books on circus history, circus posters, photographs, and artifacts, such as costumes of circus performers.

**Circus World Museum** 608 356-8341

**426 Water Street, Baraboo, WI 53913-2597**

The Library & Research Center collects all materials relating to circuses and Wild West shows. Their collections include: posters, books, photographs, diaries, correspondence, manuscripts, circus business records, props, and artifacts. The official records of the Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus are housed at the Center.

**Hertzberg Circus Museum** 210 922-7819

**210 West Market Street, San Antonio, TX 78205**

The Museum has a large collection of circus, Wild West Show, and side show material. The Museum actively collects manuscripts on circus history, photographs, posters, diaries and correspondence, route books, circus business records, books on circus history, and circus programs.

**Illinois State University** 309 438-7450

**Milner Library, Normal, IL 61761-0900**

The Special Collections and University Archives Department contains many collections dealing with the circus which include correspondence, photographs, business records, as well as a large collection of books about European circuses.

**International Circus Hall of Fame** 317 472-7553

**Post Office Box 700, Peru, IN 46970**

The Library contains information on performers who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame and other circus-related materials.

**Harvard University Library**

**617 495-2445**

**Theatre Collection, Cambridge, MA 02138**

The Theatre Collection holdings on the circus in America and Europe are vast and include a large collection of circus posters, programs, fliers, and scrapbooks.

**Memphis State University**

**901 678-2210**

**West Brister Library, Memphis, TN 38152**

The Special Collections Department oversees the Reynolds Circus Collection that includes photographs, correspondence, scrapbooks, and route cards.

**New York Historical Society**

**212 873-3400**

**170 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024**

The Historical Society has a rich collection of material that relates to the circus and its early history in the United States.

**New York Public Library**

**212 870-1630**

**Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10023**

The Performing Arts Library preserves a rich array of printed material and photographs that document the history of the circus from the early eighteenth century.

**Princeton University Library**

**609 258-3223**

**1 Washington Road, Princeton, NJ 08544**

The William Seymour Theatre Collection contains posters, parade designs, photographs, and Barnum & Bailey Circus records prior to 1906.

**Sauk County Historical Society**

**608 356-1001**

**531 Fourth Avenue, Post Office Box 651, Baraboo, WI 53913**

The Historical Society has a varied collection of moderate size that relates to the Ringling family and to the circus. The collection contains family and circus photographs, circus programs, costumes, receipt books, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and information on the Ringling buildings in Baraboo.

**Shelburne Museum**

**802 985-3344**

**US Route 7, Shelbourne, VT 05482**

The Museum preserves a large collection of material that document the early history of the circus in America.





**The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art**  
***The State Art Museum***

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Lawton Chiles

***Lieutenant Governor***

Buddy McKay

***Secretary of State***

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